



# Maneuver Warfare

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# Purpose



MSTP

- Review the tenets of maneuver warfare (MW)

...in order to...

- Translate our warfighting philosophy into functional reality

# Outline



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- The Problem
- The Solution

# Maneuver Warfare Hurdles



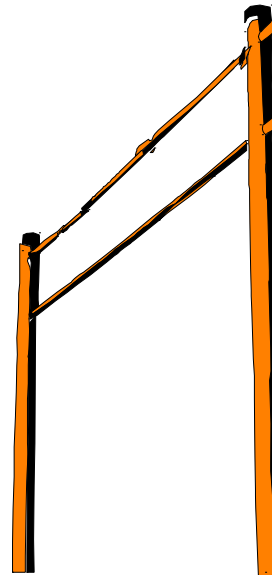
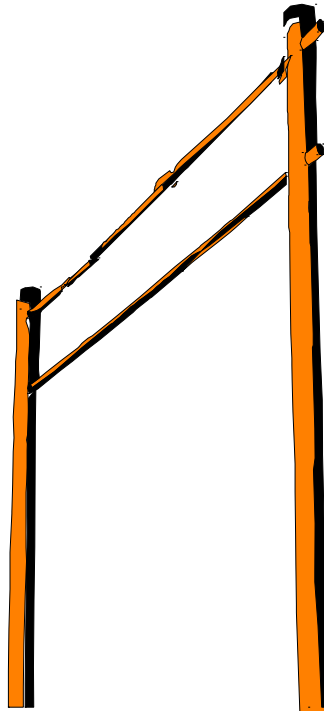
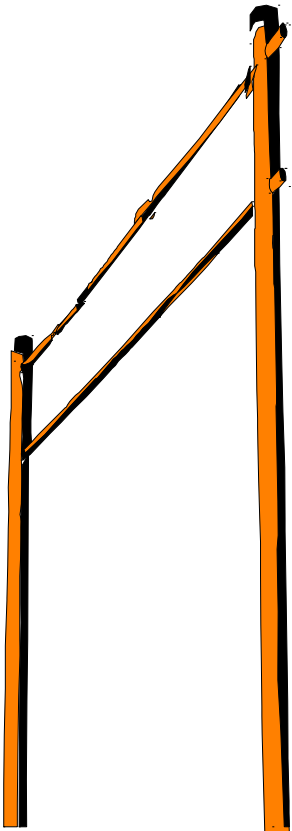
MSTP

**Bill Lind**

**Dead Germans**

**The American Way**

**Nothing New**



# History of Maneuver Warfare



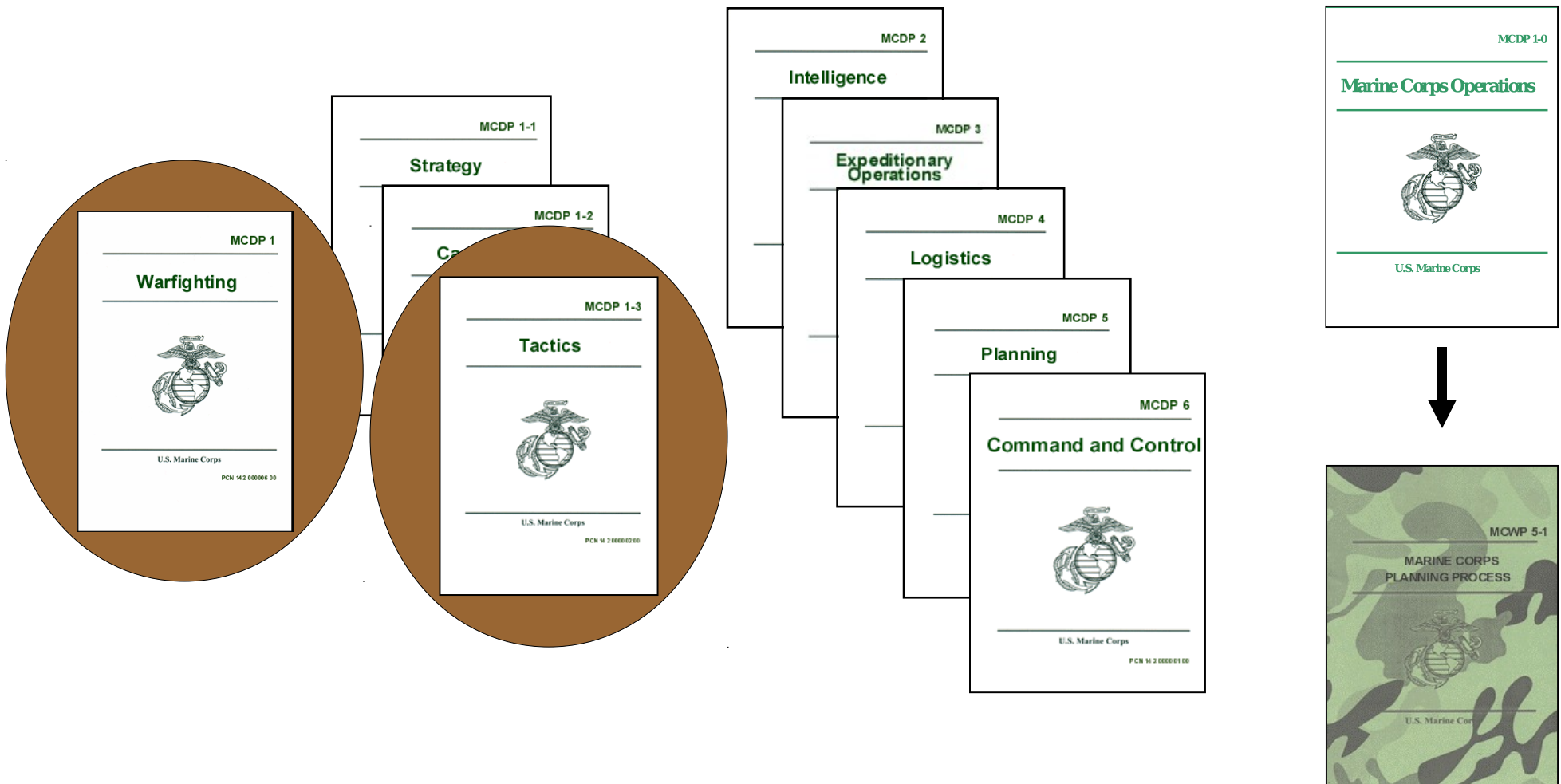
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- 1800s: Clausewitz wrote 2 volumes
- 1978: Boyd's "Patterns of Conflict"
- 1983: MGen Gray hears Boyd's 5-hr brief
- 1985: Bill Lind writes expensive book
- 1987: Gen Gray becomes 29th CMC
- 1989: FMFM-1 signed
- 1997: MCDPs 1 and 1-3, *Tactics*, signed
- 2004: ????

# Scope



**MSTP**



# The Nature of War



MSTP

- Friction
- Mental, Moral, and Physical Forces
- John Boyd and the OODA Loop

# Nature of War



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## Friction

- Disorder
- Uncertainty
- Complexity
- Violence and Danger
- The Human Dimension

**Internal**

**External**





# Mental, Moral, and Physical Forces

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- War is characterized by the interaction of mental, moral, and physical (MM&P) forces
  - They comprise the enemy “system”
- Their interaction offers compounding effects
  - Physical attacks can lead to psychological advantages
  - Psychological attacks lead to material gains

# Physical Forces



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- Tangible, observable, understood
- Measurable, predictable
- Force ratios



# Mental and Moral Forces

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- Mental
  - Intellectual talents
  - Devise tactics & strategies, develop plans
- Moral
  - Fear, courage, esprit, morale
- Psychological Forces
  - Less tangible
  - Difficult to quantify
  - Essential to cohesion

# Psychology in War



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- Because it is difficult to come to grips with moral and mental forces, it is tempting to exclude them from our study of war.

However, any doctrine or theory of war that neglects these factors **ignores the greater part of the nature of war.**

—MCDP 1, *Warfighting*

- In war, the moral is to the material as three to one.  
—Napoleon

# Psychology...Small Wars Manual



MSTP

- The great importance of psychology in small wars must be appreciated. It is a field of unlimited extent and possibilities, to which much time and study should be devoted. It cannot be stated in rules and learned like mathematics.
- A Force Commander who gains his objectives in a small war without firing a shot has attained far greater success than one who resorted to the use of arms.

# Psychology in War

MSTP

- “Positions are seldom lost because they have been destroyed, but almost invariably because the leader has decided in his own mind the position cannot be held.”  
—A.A. Vandergrift
- “The indirect approach attacks the enemy along the line of least expectation and least resistance, resulting in the **psychological dislocation** of the enemy. This...dislocation often results in the enemy’s defeat on a scale **out of proportion to the effect employed.**”  
—B.H. Liddell Hart

# John Boyd and the OODA Loop

MSTP

- War is a competition in time
  - More so than positional advantage
  - Which makes friction such a critical factor
- Patterns of conflict
  - Observe, orient, decide, act (OODA Loop)
  - Fastest “looper” gains a powerful advantage
  - Makes speed a true weapon
  - Not just speed, but the entire speed family



# Speed Family

MSTP

- Relative Speed
- Tempo
  - Speed over time
  - Controlling the Battle Rhythm
- Timing
- Agility





**If this is the nature of war, how do we win the competition in time ?**

# Maneuver Warfare Defined



MSTP

- *Maneuver warfare is a warfighting philosophy that seeks to shatter the enemy's cohesion through a variety of rapid, focused, and unexpected actions which create a turbulent and rapidly deteriorating situation with which the enemy cannot cope.*

*MCDP 1, Warfighting*

# Friendly Actions



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- Orient on the Enemy – Outward Focus
- Philosophy of Command
- Mission Tactics
- Commander's Intent
- Main Effort

# Orient on the Enemy-Outward Focus



MSTP

- Understand the enemy
  - IPB, COG-CV, CBAE
  - Linkages among MM&P
  - ID, attack weakness
    - To shatter cohesion
- Seek decisive battle
  - Avoid incremental gains
- Avoid inward focus
  - Develop SOPs to codify processes
  - Conduct drills and rehearsals to refine procedures

# Philosophy of Command



MSTP

- A pre-occupation with decisive battle
- Thrive in the chaos; drive change
- Simple, flexible plans
- Decentralize command and control
  - Distribute the uncertainty
  - MGen Myatt: “centralized vision, decentralized decision-making”
- Implicit communications
  - Exercises, PMEs, beers
- Know when to refuse battle

# Mission Tactics



MSTP

- Provide the what, not the how
  - Focus is on the outcome, not the method
- Empower subordinates
  - Freedom of initiative increases tempo
  - The strategic corporal
- Frustrate enemy C2 attacks

# Commander's Intent



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- Provides the context for subordinate actions via the purpose
  - Allows them to adapt to the constantly changing battlespace
  - Essential to the bottom-up exercise of initiative
- “No better friend, no worse enemy.”

# Main Effort

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- Commander's bid for a decision
  - Among multiple thrusts/lines of operations to...
    - Confuse the enemy
    - Disguise the main effort
    - Create other opportunities
- Focuses the command's actions
  - Unity of efforts
  - Resource allocation
- Directed at a weakness (gap, CV)
- Promotes subordinate initiative
  - *How can I best support the main effort?*



# Attacking the Enemy's Will

MSTP

## **“Increasing his friction”**

- Maneuver
  - By-pass and collapse, not “close with & destroy”
  - Create assailable flank (penetration)
  - Exploit the effects of fires (combined arms)
  - Shock, surprise, “apparent confusion”
  - Attack enemy's rear
    - Trap forces
    - Capture, destroy capabilities
    - Create panic, shatter cohesion, force abandonment
  - Exploit a gap or a fleeing enemy
  - Pursue to finish

# Attacking the Enemy's Will

MSTP

- Fires
  - Destroy enemy capabilities
    - Limits options
    - Reduces ability to react
  - Render strengths vulnerable (shaping)
    - To develop gaps
  - Create disruption
  - Exploit maneuver
    - Leaving the enemy no good solutions

# Attacking the Enemy's Will



MSTP

- Deception (or at least ambiguity)
  - Alter enemy's perception of reality
    - Leads to bad decisions
    - Slows down his decision-making
- PSYOP
  - Attacks enemy's moral cohesion
    - "No better friend, no worse enemy."
- C2 Attack (lethal & nonlethal)
  - Sever command links, slows response
  - Threatens their legitimacy
- EW

# Back to Basics

MSTP

- In the end, it gets down to the blocking and tackling of warfighting: maneuver, fires, and IO.
- As a warfighting philosophy, MW is not the tactics and techniques.
  - But it does provide the purpose and aiming points for M, F, and IO.

# The MEF and the OODA Loop



MSTP

- Observe (See the enemy)
  - IPB
  - Commander forward, Collection assets
  - Subordinate feedback (How's your IM plan?)
- Orient (assessment, maintaining SA)
  - CBAE
  - Understanding enemy intentions
  - Conditions, MOEs, planning knowledge?

# The MEF and the OODA Loop



MSTP

- Decide
  - Anticipation, branch plans
  - DPs...how many decisions will you withhold?
- Act
  - Translating your decision to the MSCs
  - Mission Orders
  - Or maybe they've acted in your behalf!

# Conclusion



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- MW is a thought process that...
  - Emphasizes how to think, not what to do
  - Targets the will to resist, not just physical resources
  - Pits strength against weakness
  - Views friction as friend and foe
  - Recognizes the situation, not the procedures, is supreme
  - Is pre-occupied with the decisive battle

# Conclusion



MSTP

What the ancients called a clever fighter is one who not only wins, but excels in winning with ease. Hence his victories bring him neither reputation for wisdom nor credit for courage. He wins his battles by making no mistakes... conquering an enemy that is already defeated.  
—Sun Tzu





**Questions or comments?**